

# Best festival ever

*That's the director's assessment of this year's Taos Shortz Film Festival*

By Rick Romancito

It's a wrap. The 2013 Taos Shortz Film Festival concluded with an "awesome party" Sunday night (March 10) at Taos Mesa Brewery to the sounds of Quentin Tarantino's favorite band Spindrift and other high quality acts. Although Tarantino didn't show (though he was invited), the festival brought back a pretty strong hint of another Taos film event from not too long ago.

Shortz founder and director Anna Cosentine was certainly a happy camper as she and her crew were striking the sets Monday (March 11), calling this year's event the "best of all years." That may be more true than ever since she told Tempo that next year Taos Shortz will have attained status among film festivals watched by members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. That's right: Next year's offerings could have the potential for being selected for a Short Film Oscar.

"Personally, for me, being up there announcing, I would see people who bought Hum Passes and they went to every single program," Cosentine said. "Then, afterwards in the lobby (at the Taos Community Auditorium), people would come up to me and say 'You know, I have never been to this festival though I live in Taos and just decided to go because we read the Tempo.' So, I think we got just a whole new audience, more supporters this year,



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From left, local artists David Mapes and Steven Gootgeld (also a filmmaker) speak with Leonard J. Sanchez, founder and CEO of Tamalewood, LLC, during the 'Tamalewood Pre-Awards Mixer' at Geraint Smith Photography Gallery, Sunday (March 10). The event was part of last weekend's four-day Taos Shortz Film Festival.

and films that were top quality."

A big shot in the arm for local mediamakers was not only the festival's special focus on Taos and New Mexico movies, but the opportunity it posed for creating networking opportunities dropped in their laps. Instead of having to find

industry insiders in Santa Fe or Albuquerque, they came to Taos.

Cosentine said locals "made great connections ... It all went well this year."

Now, work begins on making the 2014 event even better.

## 2013 Taos Shortz Awards

■ **Best Dramatic Fiction:** "Argestemplt" (Punched) by Michael Rittmannsberger. An Arabic immigrant father tries to explain to his son the essence of right and wrong.

Honorable mention: "Life of a Dog"

■ **Best Comedy:** "La Boda" (The Wedding) by Marina Seresesky. "It's difficult for an immigrant Cuban living in Spain to attend her daughter's wedding. A U.S. premiere.

Honorable mention: "Cockatoo"

■ **Best Documentary:** "Unravel" by Meghna Gupta. On a journey across Northern India, the Western world's extravagant material needs are exposed. Directorial debut.

Honorable mention: "Past Prime"

■ **Best Animated:** "Abuelas" by Afarin Eghbal. An Argentinian 'ninca mas' grandmother searches for her lost loved ones.



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Taos filmmaker and textile expert, Andrea Heckman, heads out for more Taos Shortz activity.

Honorable mention: "Wolf Dog Tales"

■ **New Mexico Zia Award:** "Brightwood" by LaDora Sella. A young girl awakens one morning to find a nest of baby mice. Can she care for them? New Mexico

Media Arts Program.

Runner up: "Sky Burial"

■ **Experimental honorable mentions:** "Sister" and "Solo Piano NYC"

■ **Director's Choice:** "Lost and Found Box of Human Sensation"

Judges were Wendy Shuey, Sean Solowiej, Kathy Fitzgerald, Kelly Clement, David Zimmerman, Kathlees Broyles and David Jean Schweitzer.

## People's Shorty Shout Outs:

"3 Very Fine Minutes" Water"

(local)

"Promo Hobo Free-heart" (local)

"Zoltan: The Hungarian Gangster of Love"

"Ambitious"

"Four Stories About

"Chasing the Dragon"

"Track By Track"

"Red Flag"

"Good Dog"

"Odds or Evens"

"Still"

"Good Karma \$1"